

New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs



consumer**brief**

The **Division of Consumer Affairs** (Division), part of the Office of the Attorney General, is the consumer protection agency for the people of the State of New Jersey.

The Division protects consumers by implementing the Consumer Fraud Act (CFA); investigating businesses, companies and stores and, when necessary, litigates against those who have violated the CFA and its regulations. The Division also provides assistance to consumers who have been defrauded in the marketplace, resolves consumers' complaints, and protects the health, safety and welfare of the public by licensing and regulating many types of businesses and more than half a million people in about 100 professions and occupations. The Division is located at 124 Halsey Street, Newark, NJ 07102.

The Division has many specialized units to accomplish its mission. The following is a list and a brief description of the functions of several of these units.

OFFICE OF CONSUMER PROTECTION (OCP)

The **Office of Consumer Protection** (OCP) is the unit that enforces the Consumer Fraud Act and its regulations. The OCP responds to consumer complaints about merchandise and services. The most frequent complaints are about cars, home repair, credit/debt, collection fraud, loan services and professional and occupational services.

The **Consumer Service Center** is the central clearinghouse for complaints and referrals. Consumers who call **973-504-6200** or **1-800-242-5846** (*toll free in New Jersey*) will be connected to a representative trained to assist them with their complaint.

The **Charities Registration Section** registers and regulates professional fundraisers and organizations that solicit charitable contributions in New Jersey. The Charities Registration Section can be reached by calling **973-504-6215**. Additional information is available at

www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/ocp/charities.htm.

The **Cyber Fraud Unit** works to protect consumers who purchase goods and services online. If you have not received an item you've ordered or have a problem with the product or service you've purchased through the Internet, please contact the Cyber Fraud Unit by calling **973-504-6200** or visiting www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/ocp/cyberfraud.htm.

The **Kosher Food Enforcement Bureau** enforces State regulations and requires establishments that sell kosher food to post the Bureau's standards of kosher and to adhere to those standards. The Bureau can be reached at **973-504-6100** or www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/ocp/kosher.htm.

The **Halal Food Enforcement Bureau** enforces the Halal Food Consumer Protection Act. New Jersey is one of the first states in the nation to ensure that when consumers buy halal foods, they have access to information that will enable them to determine whether they are getting products which have been prepared according to Islamic dietary guidelines. The Halal Food Enforcement Bureau can be reached at **973-792-4217** or www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/ocp/halal.htm.

The **Lemon Law Unit** offers consumers a remedy when the new car or new motorcycle that they bought, leased or registered, or the used car they bought in New Jersey, develops defect(s) that substantially impair the use, value or safety of the vehicle. The Lemon Law Unit can be reached at **973-504-6226** or www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/LLU/.

The **Regulated Business Section** registers home improvement contractors, public movers and warehousemen, and telemarketers. This unit also licenses athletic/booking agencies, career consulting or counseling services, headhunters, temporary health care agencies, nursing registries and home health care agencies, prepaid computer job-matching services, modeling and talent agencies, ticket resellers and health spas. The Regulated

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Business Section can be reached at **973-504-6261**. Go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/ocp/regulate.htm** for additional information.

LEGALIZED GAMES OF CHANCE CONTROL COMMISSION

The **Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission** administers and enforces the bingo, raffle and amusement game licensing laws; coordinates uniform administration of the laws with municipal licensing authorities; registers organizations that wish to conduct bingos or raffles; monitors the use of proceeds from the games; and licenses amusement game operators, premise providers, equipment providers, manufacturers and distributors. You may call **973-273-8000**, or go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/lgccc.htm** for additional information.

BUREAU OF SECURITIES

The **Bureau of Securities** administers and enforces the State's securities law, registers securities sold in New Jersey, registers individuals and firms engaged in the sale of securities or investment advice in the State and responds to investors' complaints. Investors are encouraged to check the registration status and disciplinary history of firms and individuals before they invest. Questions and complaints should be directed to the Bureau of Securities, 153 Halsey Street, P.O. Box 47029, Newark, NJ 07101 or you can call **973-504-3600** or go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/bos.htm** for additional information.

OFFICE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

The **Office of Weights and Measures** works in conjunction with county and municipal offices to enforce New Jersey's weights and measures statutes. At least once a year, inspectors check every weighing and measuring device used in commercial transactions, including gas pumps, supermarket scales, unit price scanners, and meters used to measure oil deliveries. If you have a problem with a weights and measures device, try to resolve it with the manager or owner. If he/she cannot resolve your problem to your satisfaction, contact the New Jersey Office of Weights and Measures at 1261 Route 1 & 9 South, Avenel, NJ 07001 or call **732-815-4840** or go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/owm.htm**.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

Part of the Division's mission is to educate consumers in order to prevent them from becoming victims of fraud. Special attention is given to our seniors, since they are often targeted by con artists. The Division, through its Outreach Program, each year presents the FedUp Senior Fraud Education and Protection Program to hundreds

of seniors throughout the State. Please visit **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/fedup/NewFedUp.pdf** for additional information.

PROFESSIONAL/OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING BOARDS/ COMMITTEES

The **Professional and Occupational Boards and Committees** within the Division of Consumer Affairs license and supervise more than half a million individuals in over 100 occupations and professions in New Jersey. All of the boards and committees are located at 124 Halsey Street in Newark except for the State Board of Medical Examiners which is located at 140 East Front Street, 2nd Floor, Trenton, NJ 08625. Visit **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/boards.htm** to learn more about our boards and committees.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE REGISTRY

Going to the Division's **Prescription Drug Price Registry** gives consumers the opportunity to check and compare prices of the most widely prescribed drugs offered by pharmacies in their area. Just go to **www.njdrugprices.nj.gov** to take advantage of the opportunity to compare prices.

N.J. PRESCRIPTION MONITORING PROGRAM

The **N.J. Prescription Monitoring Program** is a statewide database that collects prescription information on Controlled Dangerous Substances and Human Growth Hormone. The program is an important component of the Division of Consumer Affairs' initiative to halt the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs. For more information go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/pmp/**.

PROJECT MEDICINE DROP

The Division of Consumer Affairs has developed **Project Medicine Drop** in an effort to halt the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs. It allows consumers to dispose of unused and expired medications anonymously, 365 days a year, at "prescription drug drop boxes" located within participating police departments in all 21 counties. For more information go to: **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/meddrop/**.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Before filing a complaint, give the business or licensed professional an opportunity to resolve the problem directly. If you still are not satisfied with the outcome, you may contact the Division of Consumer Affairs at **800-242-5846** to request that a complaint form be mailed to you, or you may go to **www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/comp.htm** to download a complaint form.

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